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Introduction

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In response to the refugee crisis and the constant news reports about the many (young) lives lost at sea, a recent article in *The Guardian* criticized Britain's highly restrictive stance towards taking in desperate refugees from Syria with the following comment: 'Refugees are human'. This comment is both telling and timely. It implies that those of us who ostensibly already belong need to be reminded of our shared humanity and responsibilities towards those who do not. The refugee crisis has ignited highly emotional political and public debates as to whether, how many and which refugees should be taken in by European countries and by countries farther afield. These debates highlight the issue of contested belonging, the subject of this book.

The consequences of postcolonialism and globalization have long been a subject of scientific debate. However, the focus on the concept of belonging and associated concepts like home, citizenship, exclusion and inclusion has only slowly started to emerge over the past two decades, complementing previous discourses on identity and identification (see Anthias, 2002; Croucher, 2004; Duyvendak, 2011; Eriksen, 2002; Ghorashi, 2003; Yuval-Davis, 2006).

As increasing numbers of people find themselves on the move, settlement can be neither taken for granted, nor can belonging to a particular country be considered the key aspect of a person's identity(ies). The places in which people reside still play a significant role when it comes to expressing, negotiating and contesting (non)belonging. Belonging becomes a kind of Goffmanian stage where identities are performed and

mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion are enacted. However, belonging, and along with it, a sense of home, is multiscalar (Blunt & Dowling, 2006) – that is, it is possible for a variety of contradictory positionings and meanings to coexist within the same environment. For instance, Back (1996) has shown that lower-class Afro-Caribbean youths in London, while excluded and discriminated against at the national level, are largely included and even emulated by lower-class ethnic English youths in their neighbourhood. Together they have created a common youth culture heavily influenced by Afro-Caribbean music, clothing styles and slang, which serve as mechanisms of inclusion. In contrast, Vietnamese youths in the same youth culture face exclusion as expressed through name calling and bullying because they do not live up to the ideal of the hypermasculine male that is idolized in this environment.

Belonging is not only multiscalar, it can also be multilocal (Brah, 1996; Ghorashi, 2003). A person can have or identify with multiple national or ethnic identities at the same time (see e.g. Woodward, 1997), and people can form attachments to several places, countries and nations. Ghorashi (2003) calls this a diasporic approach to home, whereby a simultaneous connection to a diversity of places probably reflects the experience of many migrants more accurately than does an unambiguous loyalty to one place (see also Settles, 2001). This is particularly the reality of the younger generation who are making connections to the variety of landscapes available to them without being able to rely on past or traditional structures. For this generation, old notions of locality and community are being replaced by networks and social worlds in the ongoing production of a sense of belonging (Rizvi, 2012).

These nontraditional realities of connection are often at odds with the hegemonic nationalistic discourses informed by a singular rooting of belonging that is based on what Malkki (1995) calls ‘the sedentary bias’. Although our era is defined as one of fluidity and mobility (Bauman, 2000; Urry, 2000), dominant discourses on integration and belonging in Europe are primarily informed by ‘the national order of things’ in which ‘rootedness’ in a culture or a geographic territory is considered a natural and normal feature of humanity (Malkki, 1995, p. 509; Ghorashi, 2016). In these discourses belonging is cast in zero-sum terms, with specific and often negative consequences for migrants and their children. There is a growing body of literature criticizing sedentarist approaches to belonging and arguing instead for a relational, multiple, layered and situational approach (Ghorashi & Vieten, 2012). Here, belonging does not have to be tied to a physical space; it can just as easily be symbolic, imagined, remembered or even virtual (see e.g. Alinejad, 2017; Blunt & Dowling, 2006; Dawson, 2008; Migdal, 2004). For instance, refugees and migrants

who have had to leave their ‘home’ may one day return there, but it will have changed in so many respects that it will not be the same home they once left behind (Brah, 1996). Moreover, internet platforms and social media provide new venues through which belonging can be shaped and through which people can be included and excluded from certain ethnic groups, thereby contesting binary forms of belonging and creating alternative spaces for hyphenated identities (Alinejad, 2017).

A more fluid and multilayered approach of belonging has thus enabled scholars to capture different struggles and achievements through ‘emplacement practices’ (Al-Ali & Koser, 2002; Blunt & Dowling, 2006; Mallett, 2004), ‘practices of home-making’ (Blunt & Dowling, 2006, p. 196; Hammond, 2004; Mallett, 2004) or appropriation (Dovey, 1985). Belonging is achieved in practice by becoming familiar with the places and sociocultural environments in which people live (Hammond, 2004). This can involve finding shops and getting used to the local food, learning the language and how the public transportation works, or understanding the local norms, values, rules and customs (e.g. Blunt & Dowling, 2006). Emplacement practices can also involve blending former and new cultures – for example, introducing items from one’s country of origin – thereby symbolically creating continuity between old and new identities (Salih, 2000) and constructing a biographical coherence that can enable a person to feel more at home in the new place of residence.

A sense of belonging also depends on whether people feel safe in the environments in which they live. Different degrees and forms of belonging or nonbelonging are experienced and challenged in the neighbourhood, the workplace and at home, as well as at municipal and national levels (see also Crul, Schneider, & Lelie, 2013; Van der Graaf & Duyvendak, 2009). Feeling free and having the right to control one’s own life greatly enhances feelings of belonging (Bloch, 2002; Dawson, 2008; Dovey, 1985; Read, 2008; Van der Horst, 2004). Stability and the feeling of being anchored in the world may also be important for a sense of belonging, especially for migrants and refugees. But, according to Gilroy (2006), having a sense that you are going somewhere, that you are building a future, creating and shaping your own biography, may be just as important as rootedness for feeling that you belong (see also Savage, Bagnall, & Longhurst, 2005). Establishing and maintaining a network of family and friends, having good relations with colleagues and neighbours and taking active part in religious associations or sports clubs are all pivotal in enhancing feelings of belonging in the neighbourhood, city and even at the national level (Van der Graaf & Duyvendak, 2009). Employment, including volunteer work, is also associated with an increased sense of belonging (Savage et al., 2005; Van der Graaf & Duyvendak, 2009).

For migrants, developing a sense of belonging strongly hinges on their individual agency and initiative. However, it is also very dependent on the host society: whether that society accepts them at legal, social, political and cultural levels and helps them to feel safe (Brettell, 2000; Calhoun, 2003; Jones, 1999; McDowell, 1999; Settles, 2001) as well as whether their belonging in that society is contested. As many authors point out, feeling understood (Holy, 1998; Ignatieff, 1994; Räthzel, 1994) and, more importantly, accepted and even appreciated are essential to developing a sense of home and national identity in the host country (Räthzel, 1994; Wu, 1993). However, research indicates that, especially when it comes to feeling understood and accepted, migrant belonging is often contested (see e.g. Ghorashi, 2003, Eijberts, 2013; Pratt Ewing & Hoyler, 2008; Smets & Sneep, 2017). Thus, many migrants may feel more at home in their neighbourhoods than at the national level. Although they may feel safe among their neighbours, if there is a strong anti-immigrant discourse that threatens migrants, their feelings of belonging are likely to suffer (see Van der Graaf & Duyvendak, 2009; Smets, 2017). In a similar vein, Anthias (2002) showed that Greek-Cypriot youths in Britain felt they could not claim a British identity, as that identity was called into question every time they were identified as Greek-Cypriots. This labelling occurred despite the fact that they did not express any sense of belonging to Cyprus, but actually felt much more attached to British culture.

This book takes belonging and its contestedness as a central point of departure. It brings together contributions by both young and established scholars who address the sites, practices and narratives in which belonging is imagined, enacted, constrained, negotiated and contested. It addresses belonging from the perspectives of migrants and refugees in their host countries as well as from those of people who are ostensibly 'at home' and yet may experience various degrees of alienation in their countries of origin. It focusses on three particular dimensions of belonging: belonging as space, as practice and as biography. What role do physical, digital, transnational and in-between spaces play and how are they used to create or contest belonging? Which practices do people engage in to gain/foster/invent a specific sense of belonging? And, finally, what can the biographies and narratives of people reveal about their complicated and contested experiences of belonging?

Spaces

The concepts of belonging and sense of home are strongly associated with the notion of space (e.g. Duyvendak, 2011; Savage et al., 2005;

Smets & Watt, 2013; Watt & Smets, 2014). Space can be an actual place/space such as streets, squares, the neighbourhood, the city and even the nation (McDowell, 1999). However, space can also be symbolic, imagined, transnational or virtual (Blunt & Dowling, 2006; Dawson, 2008; Ghorashi, 2003, 2016; Migdal, 2004).

Attachment to one's original space – home country or hometown – does not always remain uncontested. Interethnic local conflicts and international conflicts can threaten people's sense of safety and freedom, alienating them from the place they once knew. Moreover, the condition of mobility and sources of imagination in the liquid modern era are connected to structures of inequality, providing some with more space for mobility than others. While individuals from privileged positions are fairly free to move around and claim multiple spaces of belonging, less privileged citizens of Europe (such as migrants and refugees) constantly feel that they are being judged as 'the other'. Their belonging is often questioned, and they are subjected to doubts about where their loyalty lies. Thus, the choice of multiplicity in terms of identity, belonging and connectedness is not the norm when it comes to those suspected of being the other: those 'not belonging to the nation and yet living inside it' (Räthzel, 1995, p. 165).

Space-based communities are often linked with belonging in the form of citizenship that goes hand in hand with enjoying certain rights and having access to certain resources such as education, health care and welfare benefits. Societies where citizens have multiple attachments and loyalties tend to be embroiled in what has been called the 'politics of belonging' (Yuval-Davis, 2006, p. 197; Yuval-Davis et al., 2006). The politics of belonging involves protecting and fortifying boundaries around the community and sharply distinguishing between who is included and who is excluded from group membership (and denying double in-group statuses), though these boundaries might be contested by both declared in- and out-group members.

In that sense 'home' only exists in memory as a person follows new routes to an elsewhere place. The challenge is to find new ways of linking people that take place in in-between spaces, where stories can be shared and where predetermined judgements are avoided, making it possible to experiment with different viewpoints, perspectives and patterns (Ghorashi, 2014).

Melding space, auto/biographical narratives and conceptual theories, Jayne O. Ifekwunigwe crafts entangled and transnational biographies of belonging concerning black constituents of the Global African Diaspora. Her intention is to unsettle the conventional conceptual tidiness of discursive formations in Europe, Africa and the Global African Diaspora,

including the ways in which circulating discourses on blackness are both indigenized and mediated by the institutional might and globalized presence of African American idioms. This analysis strives to reveal the messiness of complex racialized conceptualizations of belonging in the specific diasporic spaces of England, the United States and the clandestine migration zones of southern Europe. At the same time, she highlights transnational modalities of black and Global African Diasporic kinship, consciousness and solidarity engendered by shared lived experiences of institutionalized racism, structural inequalities and violence.

Margarethe Kusenbach examines space and place practices and experiences of older Americans who are living in senior mobile home parks in Florida, a common community type in the region. Following lifestyle migration, senior Florida transplants have developed multiple layers and ways of belonging within their new social and spatial environments. Recalling the nested character of neighbourhood communities (Kusenbach, 2008), she argues that people's senses of belonging in places varies by scale, in this case ranging from region to neighbourhood community to (type of) home. Her analysis of older Florida migrants demonstrates that several conceptions of belonging can be combined, and new ones developed, in productive ways. The chapter is based on ethnographic interviews with 18 senior households living near Florida's Gulf Coast, conducted 2005–2007.

Melissa Kelly explores how international doctoral students and post-doctoral fellows at the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein, South Africa, act on opportunities to cultivate a sense of belonging to specific spaces and places in their daily lives. In-depth biographical interviews with these students reveal that they feel vulnerable in specific urban spaces and struggle to belong to the wider South African society. However, the internationalizing campus and associated places in Bloemfontein, as well as individual research departments at the University of the Free State, have served as alternate spaces for cultivating a sense of belonging for this particular group. Moreover, the connections these migrants maintain with researchers in other parts of the world, through their research labs and study groups, have reinforced their identity as cosmopolitan professionals who belong to a global community of researchers. Rather than considering (multi)scalar belonging in a hierarchical way, therefore, the chapter emphasizes the linkages between different geographical spaces in the students' everyday lives.

Through a case study of a citizens' summit in Amsterdam, Marloes Vlind and Peer Smets examine the competing aims involved in attempts to create an in-between space, where participants struggle to obtain a

sense of belonging against a background of (non)diversity. Their research shows that a citizens' summit can be seen as an in-between space where the less powerful are empowered. Summit participants practice dialogue and create a common ground and shared ownership of ideas, problems and solutions. This provides insight into contested belongings within the democratic system in the Netherlands and elsewhere. The authors suggest that belonging, space and diversity affect the social boundaries between those in the electoral democratic system and those participating in a citizens' summit.

Ali Konyali and Elif Keskiner examine the place attachment and potential spatial mobility of professionals who work in prestigious international firms, though their parents were employed as low-skilled manual labourers upon migration. Based on in-depth interviews with professionally successful descendants of migrants from Turkey, the analysis reveals that respondents feel attached to the city they live and work in and are hesitant to move to other towns in the same country. This stands in contrast to their general display of preparedness to move to another region or country for promising job openings. As they try to adapt to market demands for flexible professionals, they display an ambiguous place attachment. Hence, a feeling of 'in-betweenness' exists as a consequence of the ongoing possibility of alienation and their market-driven individual ambition to be mobile.

Practices

In the era of liquid or late modernity, an essentialist approach with assumed fixed and rooted locations as the source of belonging is unimaginable. Bauman refers to this shift in thinking as the revenge of the nomads. In this era, it is mobility – the smaller, lighter, more portable – which is favoured (Bauman, 2000). A new kind of awareness that sees mobility and displacement as the norm allows individuals to initiate practices that create a sense of belonging. However, for individuals and groups under suspicion of being the other, belonging is much more contested than often realized. Within the dominance of what Anthias (2013) refers to as the 'culturalization of social relations', the belonging of 'cultural others' in their contexts of engagement is constantly questioned and challenged. Practices involving contestations or claims of belonging are thus strongly interwoven with the notion of power. This can entail power in the sense of dominance or advantage – as, for example, the claims of belonging by privileged groups. However, it can also

involve power in relation to emotions and practices of belonging in the tacit, taken-for-granted disciplining of the actions and interactions of individuals. Despite the exclusionary practices of dominant discourses, the simultaneous existence of past and present discourses gives migrants the potential to use them selectively in response to the opportunities and challenges they face (Levitt, 2009, p. 1226). Yet the capacity to negotiate these intersecting discourses in the practice of everyday life is quite different for various migrant groups depending on their resources, possibilities and inclusion in society. Societal inclusion and opportunities to deal with the challenges and tensions that result from intersecting discourses are crucial to one's sense of belonging (Anthias, 2006). Societal exclusion, on the other hand, increases the tension between the self-image and the attributed image (Wekker, 1998, 2016), resulting in a decreased sense of emotional connectedness and belonging to society.

The chapters of this section show how specific practices in various sites of interaction (neighbourhood, workplace and cultural activities) are key to the creation of a sense of home and belonging. These practices illustrate how belonging is imagined and enacted, negotiated and contested. Performing experiences and stories of the past and present through the creation of meaningful spaces and the use of art, media, films and other means enables the sharing of moments and memories of othering and exclusion as well as belonging and inclusion. By uncovering these practices, the contributions explore the diversity of multilayered, dynamic and contested practices of belonging that involve overlapping locations and spaces.

Floya Anthias challenges static and essentialist approaches to identity, belonging, diversity and power, offering an insightful alternative frame for approaching these concepts. She builds on her earlier work on trans-locality by focussing on a processual, intersectional and situational approach to identity, belonging and diversity. In this chapter, Anthias introduces a transnational intersectional frame that draws on the critique of methodological nationalism (Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002). She argues for a different approach to belonging that relies on solidarity building across differences, focussing on identities of action rather than identities of common origin.

Through ethnographic vignettes of immobile young Eritreans, Milena Belloni addresses an intriguing paradox of 'not feeling at home' while physically being there. She shows the multiple processes and practices of belonging in the context of the experience of losing home without migration. By using the concept of 'estrangement', Belloni provides a deeper understanding of the experience of immobile populations while adding to theoretical discussions on home-making/unmaking processes.

Moreover, she contributes to the empirical investigation of determinants of asylum flows by investigating the case of Eritrea, a major refugee-producing country.

Alice Hertzog shows how practices around bazaars reveal a visible urban marker that is mobilized within the contested modes of belonging. The chapter presents an original and ethnographic account of a cluster of cheap and cheerful bazaars in a multiethnic district of Paris. It shows how, in this context, the notion of belonging is unpacked, negotiated and bartered through material culture and practices in a commercial setting and how commercial syncretism and product design generate new practices of belonging in the city. These practices of inclusion create multiple, transnational sources of belonging and, along the way, circumvent stubborn and dominant secular norms. As they combine the sacred and the profane, these bazaars also create jobs for generations of migrants.

The chapter by Hannah Leyerzapf, Tineke Abma, Petra Verdonk and Halleh Ghorashi explores how the practice of meaningful culturalization in the interference zone of system and life world challenges the normalized exclusionary practices in an academic healthcare organization. Through a nested case study, the authors focus on individual narratives as professionals in a team and show how a system-inspired business model of diversity leads to objectification of the cultural minority professional of ‘different’ and ‘less professional’. They show the transformative capacity of alternative safe spaces that include critical reflexivity on power dynamics and on the sameness–difference hierarchy in an academic hospital.

Finally, in her chapter, Helena Oikarinen-Jabai discusses the multifaceted questions of belonging and othering of young second-generation Finnish Somalis through a participatory performative research project conducted in Helsinki. Through a coproduction with teams of art and media professionals and through performative approaches and audiovisual methods, these youngsters experiment with negotiating a form of cultural citizenship that combines different homes, nations and senses of belonging.

Biographies

The experience of ‘belonging’ or ‘home’ has become salient for nearly everyone in late modernity (Duyvendak, 2011). Life stories are a perfect place for investigating what belonging actually means to individuals in different places and in moments in their lives. They are also a site for showing how cultural discourses, social structures and practices of exclusion

and inclusion shape individuals' identities as well as their opportunities and aspirations within a particular context (Anthias, 2013). Biographical research shows how individuals continuously negotiate their multiple and often contested belongings and positions within national, cultural, ethnic and social communities (Tuider, 2012). The experience of belonging invariably takes place in a context of power relations involving exclusion and inclusion that structure people's lives in different and unequal ways (Lutz, 2004). By focussing on the individual story, biographical research can interrogate dominant narratives, making space for the myriad and sometimes unexpected ways that individuals make viable lives for themselves, even under conditions that are not of their own making.

Biographical research on belonging has often been concerned with narratives about migration, something that is reflected in the pages of this book (see e.g. Apitzsch & Siouti, 2007). The assumption has often been that mobility (migration, displacement and exile) has dramatic effects on people's lives, disrupting biographical continuity and forcing them to adopt new strategies to regain control over and make sense of their lives (Kowalksa, 2010). Yet individual narratives show how the experience of belonging or feeling at 'home' changes in the course of a person's life, taking on different meanings and values. For example, people do not always want to belong to a particular group, community, culture or nation, and, in fact, their refusal to belong may be part of their resistance to conditions of exclusion or structural inequalities and ideologies to which they do not subscribe.

The contributions in this section focus on individual life stories and how belonging is portrayed as an embodied yet changing experience that is embedded in multiple identifications, specific histories and complex contexts involving inclusion and exclusion.

Katherine Pratt Ewing takes multiple and conflicting stories about the murder of three young Muslims in North Carolina in 2015, as a starting point in order to show how the victims were imagined and remembered against the ever-shifting boundaries of who 'we' are. The three murder victims embodied the dreams of many Muslims in the United States who do not hide the Muslim side of their identities, and their deaths in the safe space of a middle-class home embodied the fear that haunts those dreams. The deaths of these 'model' Muslims have become an important vehicle for demonstrating the growing precariousness of Muslim belonging in the United States since 9/11.

Jacomijne Prins focusses on how the contradictory experiences of inclusion and exclusion, based on ethnic and religious identities, are dealt with in the life stories told by Moroccan-Dutch young adults. While the experience

of exclusion hampers their sense of national identification, at the same time, they seem to increasingly feel at home in the Netherlands. This chapter shows how they express their hopes and expectations of belonging through ambiguous, hypothetical or prospective stories about inclusion.

Paolo Boccagni revisits an extended archive of life-story interviews of immigrant domestic workers in Italy, using it as an exercise to map the underlying meanings and emotional connotations of the word 'home' (*casa*). He shows how they struggle to reconcile the messy, everyday experience of home with the often unhomey setting of intensive live-in care work by using a future-oriented attachment to their 'home communities' before emigration. His study provides the grounds for distinguishing between migrants' experiences and practices of 'belonging' and their actual 'feeling at home'.

Leila Kian and Halleh Ghorashi explore struggles around identity and belonging of second-generation Iranian-Dutch women against the backdrop of Dutch discourses on migration and integration. This generation has navigated between Dutch society and their parents' complicated heritage against the shifting backdrops of the pre- and post-9/11 worlds. Based on the narratives in this study, the authors argue that these women, although perfectly 'integrated', are still frequently approached and labelled as 'foreigners', which directly negatively impacts their sense of belonging in Dutch society.

Tine Davids and Karin Willemse compare two narratives of elite women, one in Mexico and one in Sudan, in order to understand how motherhood serves, and is negotiated, as an identity marker in processes of belonging and exclusion in these widely differing nation-states. In comparing these biographical stories as 'narrations of the nation', they show how moral agency is constructed in negotiation with gendered notions of national identity and what the similarities and differences reveal about processes of national belonging.

Taken together, the contributions in this book illustrate the diversity in people's experiences of belonging as well as the challenges scholars face in understanding and explaining those experiences. While the conditions under which people attempt to create some sense of home for themselves are sometimes daunting, their resilience in the face of social inequalities and hierarchies of power is also heartening and hope-giving. We, therefore, close the book on an optimistic note with an eye to a more inclusive future for us all.

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